

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending in the application. As required, the applicants provisionally elect to prosecute the apparatus claims of Group I, including claims 1-12, 20, and 21. However, the applicants make this election *with traverse*. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement are hereby respectfully solicited in view of the following remarks.

Election/Restriction

The office action has set forth a restriction between two inventions including the apparatus claims of Group I and the method claims or process claims of Group II. The office action states that in "the instant case, the product can be accomplished by *welding* the second end portion to the valve plug." The applicants disagree with this statement.

The intent of the invention is to have removable end portions of the valve plug so that the end portions can be selectively removed, replaced, and interchanged in order to vary or alter at least one performance or flow characteristic of the sleeve valve. In accordance with that intention, claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the second end portion is "removably mountable to the part of the valve plug." Thus, the product and process of the invention are closely related and the product cannot be achieved by welding the second end portion to the valve plug.

For at least this reason, the applicants respectfully request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn.

Additionally, the product and process of the invention are so closely related that an adequate search of the product or the process would necessarily require a search of the prior art directed to the other of the process or product. For this additional reason, the applicants believe that no substantial burden would be placed on the examiner by examining both the product claims 1-12, 20, and 21 in conjunction with the process claims 13-19. For at least this additional reason, the applicants respectfully request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn and that all claims 1-21 be examined in this application.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement are hereby respectfully solicited. The applicants have made the necessary provisional election to prosecute the apparatus claims of Group I. However, the applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the restriction requirement based on the foregoing reasons. All of claims 1-21 are believed by the applicants to be closely related requiring simultaneous search of both the product and process claims.

The examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below in order to discuss any remaining issues or matters of form that will place this case in condition for allowance.

No fee is believed due at this time. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency, or to credit any overpayments, to Deposit Account No. 13-2855 of the undersigned's firm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Bryan J. Lempia", is written over a horizontal line.

Bryan J. Lempia
Reg. No. 39,746
MARSHALL, GERSTEIN & BORUN LLP
233 S. Wacker Dr.
6300 Sears Tower
Chicago, Illinois 60606
(312) 474-6300

April 14, 2005